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ABSTRACT

A teacher education course strongly emphasizing field work in classrooms, team teaching, and providing early opportunity for informed career choice is described. The following major objectives of the course are identified and their implementation described: (1) provide students with intensified field experiences very early in and throughout the teacher education program; (2) provide for more effective utilization of faculty through teaching teams; (3) provide for more program flexibility by using block scheduling of professional courses; (4) provide for early identification and counseling of prospective teachers; and (5) enhance individualization of instruction through the development and utilization of a learning resource center. (JD)

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THIBODAUX, LOUISIANA 70301

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BOX 2053
UNIVERSITY STATION

October 30, 1978

Dr. Edward C. Pomeroy
Executive Director, AACTE
One Dupont Circle
Washington, D. C. 20036

Dear Dr. Pomeroy:

We respectfully submit the following entry for consideration for the Distinguished Achievement Award as presented by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education.

We are very proud of our program because it involved public school teachers, administrators and parents working with the University in its preparation. The program was six years in preparation before its inception, and the fruit of our efforts have been the positive feedback we have received from the schools where our young people are teaching.

Sincerely,

D. G. Joseph
Chief Institutional Representative
AACTE

DGJ:pt
Enclosure

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Entry for
American Association of Colleges
for
Teacher Education
Distinguished Achievement Award

Nicholls State University
Thibodaux, Louisiana

AACTE Distinguished Achievement Award Program

Summary Statement
by
Nicholls State University
College of Education

The Nicholls Teacher Education Program (NTEP) represents an extensive cooperative effort on the part of the faculty and students of the College of Education and selected personnel of the public schools served by Nicholls State University. It is an innovative approach to teacher education which utilizes many deviations in design and implementation from "traditional" programs. Notable among these would be the restructuring of some professional courses, team-teaching by instructors, the establishment and utilization of a learning resource center, requiring minimum performance standards of the students at each level of professional development, and a heavy field-experience component beginning in the first semester of the sophomore year and intensifying in involvement to the student teaching semester.

The most noteworthy component of NTEP is its extensiveness since it includes all aspects of teacher training at Nicholls State University. It is not confined to any one semester nor any one area of certification; it encompasses all majors in the fields of elementary and secondary education. It is an ambitious undertaking but one which hopefully will serve to strengthen all areas of teacher education.

Such a massive undertaking of designing a teacher education program did of necessity involve careful planning, extended implementation, and continuous assessment and revision in order to produce an exemplary product. This process had to be applied equally to each component as well as the total program.

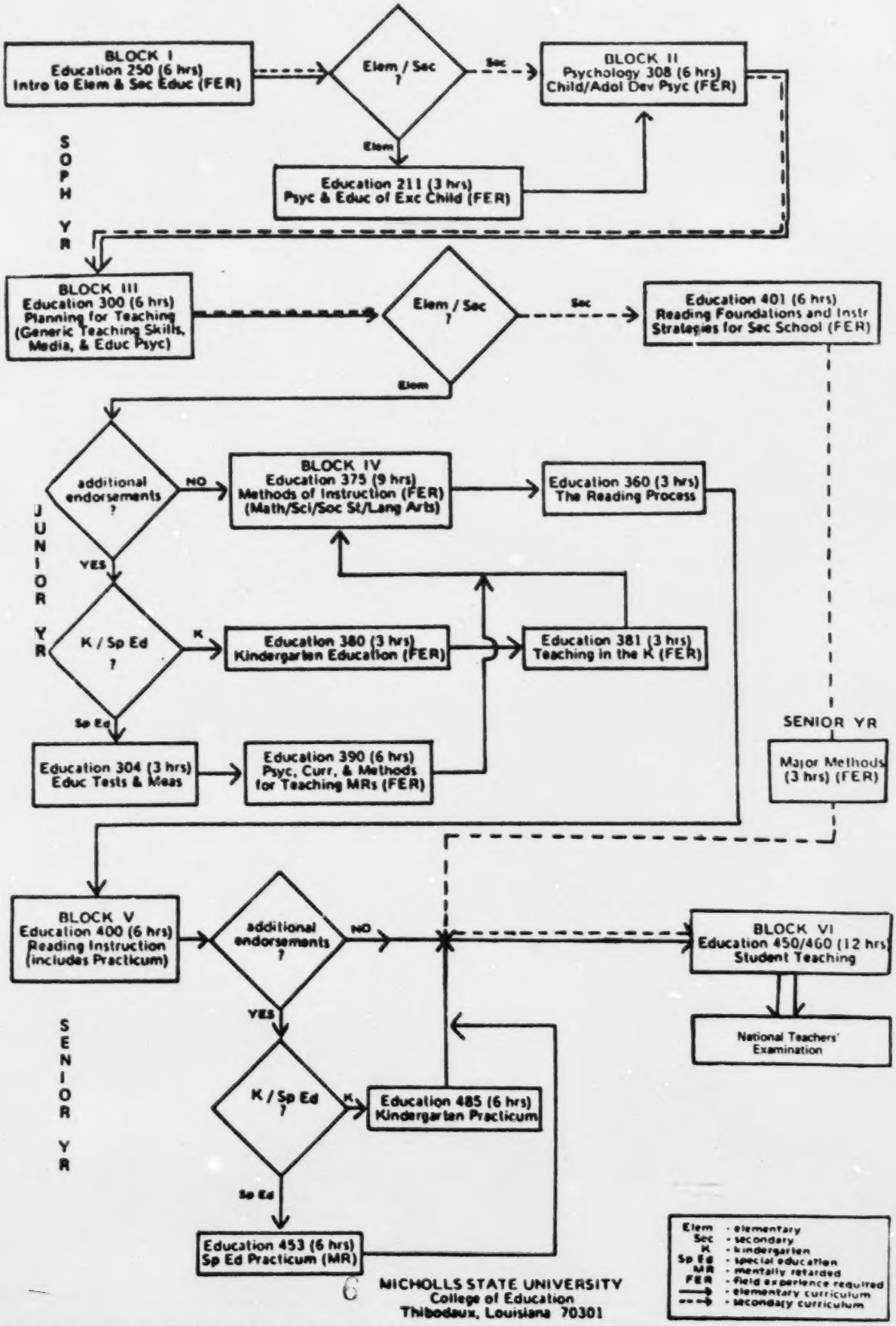
The Nicholls Teacher Education Program utilizes a professional-block approach to its total program design. Large group instruction, small group discussion and individual conferences have been structured into each "block." The general sequence of these "blocks" is: Block I (Education 250 - a six semester hour course) Elementary and secondary majors are grouped in this course which essentially develops an awareness of education; Block II (Psychology 308 - a six semester hour course) Elementary and secondary majors are continued together for this course and concentrate on a study of child and adolescent developmental psychology; Block III (Education 300 - a six semester hour course) Again joint scheduling of elementary and secondary majors is continued with their study being focused on generic teaching skills. At this point, secondary majors are scheduled into a major methods course. Elementary majors are scheduled into Block IV (Education 375 - a nine semester hour course) Instruction in the methodology utilized by the elementary teacher is the focus of this course. Elementary majors also schedule Block V (Education 400 - a six semester hour course) Reading instruction in the elementary school is provided for the students in this block.

Recently, the Louisiana legislature mandated additional requirements in the instruction of reading. These requirements, to be implemented in the current academic year, include a six and a three hour course for secondary and elementary majors, respectively.

Initially, 62 students were enrolled in the program on a pilot basis. Presently, all students (1086) are enrolled in the program.

The attached flow chart provides a concise understanding of the program's professional component.

Nicholls Teacher Education Program



NICHOLLS STATE UNIVERSITY
College of Education
Thibodaux, Louisiana 70301

AACTE Distinguished Achievement Award Program

Comprehensive Explanation and Analysis
by
Nicholls State University
College of Education

Program Name: Nicholls' Teacher Education Program

University: Nicholls State University

Curriculum: Embraces all Teacher Education Programs

Program Objectives:

(1) To provide students with intensified field experiences very early in and throughout the teacher education program.

(2) To provide for more effective utilization of faculty through teaching teams.

(3) To provide for more program flexibility by using block scheduling of professional courses.

(4) To provide for early identification and counseling of prospective teachers.

(5) To enhance individualization of instruction through the development and utilization of a learning resource center.

Nicholls Teacher Education Program

There has been considerable criticism leveled at traditional teacher education programs. In general, the literature on the subject produces concern in three major areas. First, traditional programs do not provide prospective teachers field experiences in actual classroom situations early enough in their training. Secondly, college education courses have not remained flexible enough to reflect practices existing in the field. Thirdly, programs have not provided enough diversified experiences.

Four years ago, a Coordinating Committee consisting of faculty and students of the College of Education and selected personnel and parents from the Assumption, Lafourche and Terrebonne public school districts through extensive cooperative effort designed an innovative teacher education program which they felt addressed itself to the major criticisms of traditional programs. The program is extensive. It includes all aspects of teacher education at Nicholls State University and embraces all areas of state certification in the fields of elementary and secondary education. Among the committee's early tasks was the review of the teaching competencies submitted by the various instructors of the courses which would comprise each block. This body recommended the structure for (Unit, Module, Phase, Competency) and the broad course content of each block. Special committees, consisting of university faculty members, students, and cooperating teachers in the student teaching program, were appointed by the Head of the Department of Education and given charge to design the specifics of Block I in detail. The finished products of these committees were submitted to the Coordinating Committee for their reaction, revision, and final approval prior to being published. This procedure was repeated in planning for subsequent "blocks."

Students meeting college admission requirements begin professional preparation during their initial sophomore semester.[1] In order to remain in the program, students must meet all requirements specified in the "Admission and Retention Policy" of the College of Education.[2]

Elementary and secondary education majors are grouped in Block I (Education 250) and in the two successive blocks, Psychology 308 and Education 300. The purpose of this grouping is to expose all students to the total profession early in their college careers in order to aid them in deciding upon the particular level at which they desire to teach. After completion of the third block, secondary majors are scheduled in Education 401, a six (6) semester hour course in the instruction of reading in the secondary school. A major methods course follows. Elementary majors proceed through Education 360 and Blocks IV and V (Education 375 and 400). Special Education and Kindergarten Education majors are required to schedule additional course work in their areas of specialization prior to Block V. The education program for all students concludes with student teaching.[3]

The revised program differs significantly from the traditional education offering at Nicholls. Apart from all students being grouped in the first three blocks, other changes have been made. Team teaching is employed in

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[1]Before scheduling Block I students must have earned 30 hours credit, have an overall 2.200 based on 4.000 grade point average, a grade of "C" or better in English 101 and 102, and have had three clock hours of counseling regarding the education profession by personnel outside of the teacher education program.

[2]See Attachment, "Admission and Retention Policy."

[3]Students in Special Education, Library Science, and Kindergarten Education must also complete a practicum in addition to student teaching.

each block as two or more faculty members are charged with the task of pooling their efforts in planning, instructing, and evaluating the work of the students. In addition to the traditional college and university facilities available for student use, a learning resource center has been established to meet the particular needs of education majors.

The resource center, containing textbooks, curriculum guides, resource units, and audio-visual materials and equipment, is staffed by professional librarians. Available for student use throughout the school day, it provides tables and study carrels and an atmosphere conducive to study and research.

Another essential element of NTEP is the field experience component beginning with the initial block for all students. In the traditional program, students visited classes in public schools surrounding the university, but seldom did they become actively involved in those classes. Consequently, many students often entered student teaching with limited exposure to actual classroom situations.

The new program has sought to remedy this situation by providing students with classroom experiences early in their education careers. In the early blocks, students may spend as much as one-fourth of their time during the semester in actual classroom situations. The students actively participate in the classes. They work with individual students, small and large groups of students, and assist classroom teachers. The Nicholls' students participate in a variety of activities, from the very basic in Block I, such as handing out exam papers or reading stories to children, to the more advanced, as in Block IV, of actually planning and presenting short lessons. The new program is a building process, each

block adding its particular competencies and experiences to those of the preceeding blocks. A brief description of the individual blocks follows, and should contribute to a better understanding of the total program.

Education 250: Introduction to Elementary and Secondary Education
(6 semester hours credit)

The initial education course, like all offerings at the university level, has undergone constant study and revision since its conception. Block I has changed since the first offering in 1974, but it continues to reflect the goals of the original course. Team teaching is utilized by two faculty members, who teach each section of the block.

Block I is an "awareness" course, introducing students to the basics of education. The course is composed of three major units--The Teacher, The Learner, and The School-with each unit broken into a series of modules and phases. Throughout the course, emphasis is placed on education in Louisiana as the majority of the students will ultimately teach in the state. However, the course may not be considered narrow in scope since national trends, developments, and problems of education are also considered.

Field experiences are a major component of the Block I offering. During the semester each student is exposed to all levels of public education, a factor which has proven to be valuable for several reasons: the field experiences allow each education major to actually work in classrooms assisting teachers and children alike; these experiences provide the students with the opportunity to better decide upon the level of education at which they would desire to teach; and, it gives them a first-hand view of education in action.

This last reason is extremely important as students, early in their college careers, are allowed to evaluate teaching and their own expectations of the profession. If they conclude that they do not care for education as a career, they may easily change to another field without losing a major portion of their college hours. It is a primary objective of the total NTEP program that all students entering the teaching profession know that they want to teach.

Upon completion of the block, the students have gained insights into education that the traditional program often did not bring until student teaching. They have been introduced to the profession, they are aware of the concept of learning, and they realize the place of schools in our society. In addition to this, they have been allowed to observe and participate in education in action. Those students successfully mastering the competencies of the block then proceed to Block II.[4]

Psychology 308: Child and Adolescent Developmental Psychology
(6 semester hours credit)

As previously noted, elementary and secondary education majors in the traditional program followed separate paths in their preparation to teach, whereas the block program groups all students in their first three professional courses. As Block I provides an overview of the total education profession, Block II provides a similar view of the total child.

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[4] Students must complete Education 250 with a grade of "C" or better and Speech 101 with a similar grade prior to enrollment in Psychology 308.

Like Block I, Psychology 308 uses team teaching to better achieve its objectives. These objectives can be summarized as gaining information on and an understanding of development from conception through adolescence, specifically covering physical, personality, cognitive, social, and sexual development. The course begins with information on physical development, covering the basic capabilities of the child at birth and how these capabilities are passed on from the parents. This section also covers the capabilities of infants through about age three. This part of the course also seeks to make students aware of the importance of information processing, intellectual competency, creativity, and self-concept in the development of school children.

During the remaining portion of the course, a combined topical and age-stage organization is used, with consideration of the major topics that arise during the preschool period, the childhood/elementary school period, and the adolescent period. The major topics and subtopics covered include: physical and cognitive growth and development, language, learning, memory, problems of development, and perception, social, psychosexual, and personality development.

In this block the field experience component continues to be stressed. In Block I students go into the field to actually work with teachers in the classroom. Field experiences in the second block, concentrate on the task of observing and reporting on students in the school environment. Attention is paid to interaction, the different roles adopted by children in groups, and the overall stages of physical, motor, mental, emotional, and social development of individuals.

Education 300: Planning For Teaching
(6 semester hours credit)

Block III is a cooperative merger of disciplines emphasizing the psychological rationale of and strategies for instructional planning and the effective utilization of audio-visual techniques in implementing such strategies.

The planning for instruction component focuses on generic teaching skills. The rationale of this component is that the teacher is a decision maker, one who plans, implements, evaluates, and makes decisions as a part of the instructional role. In order to make and carry out these decisions the teacher needs certain teaching skills. These generic skills are presented by discussing the theory behind the skills. Practice situations are given where the skill can be applied and feedback can be received. Once these skills have been conceptualized, the students are required to select a topic, subject-area, and grade level, and construct three sequential lesson plans.

In this way it is expected that each student will be able to actually plan lessons for instruction with full understanding of the psychological rationale of and implication for what he hopes to accomplish (objectives), how he hopes to accomplish this (procedure), and how he will determine this has been accomplished (evaluation).

In the educational psychology component of the course, students are exposed to philosophical ideas which have influenced the development of psychology. Also, an awareness of the major schools of thought, personalities, and how these have influenced educational-instructional theory and application is provided students so that they may better understand teaching as an art-science.

Students in the block are exposed to the major psychological theories

and how they are reflected in instructional activities and approaches in teaching. An awareness of the psychological bases for goal-setting and the use of instructional objectives in teaching and for structuring learning activities is a major aspect of this component. Finally, students are provided with the basic theories, principles, and skills involved in the motivation of students and in testing and measurement. These competencies, in conjunction with the students' knowledge of childhood behavior and development, greatly facilitate the creation of a positive learning environment when these same students begin their actual classroom teaching.

The audio-visual component of the block provides students with the theory and use of visual aids in the classroom. Students are instructed in the operation and care of audio-visual equipment that may be used in the classroom. They acquire the ability to selectively choose the proper equipment to best assist a student or students in learning. The use of media is also stressed for its ability to aid students and teachers alike in acquiring and developing a positive self-concept and conveying this to others. Students are also instructed on the construction and use of various instructional graphics for use in the classroom.

From this aspect of the course, students develop an awareness of the numerous barriers to effective classroom communications and methods to overcome such barriers. Students also become cognizant of the various teaching strategies for classroom use and how they may be complemented through the use of the proper instructional media.

Block III continues to utilize team teaching to achieve its goals but the course differs from the two preceeding blocks in that the field experience component centers on observations of children by the students.

Students concentrate on the basic mechanics of teaching before moving on to the fourth block and returning to the field and/or method course work.

It is after the third block that elementary and secondary education majors diverge to their particular reading and methods courses.[5] However, after completion of the first three blocks, students have been exposed to all levels of public education; they possess an understanding of schools and students. They have a basic knowledge of different classroom strategies and techniques vital to successful teaching. And, they have been provided ample opportunities to evaluate the teaching profession and their own aspirations.

Education 375: Methods of Instruction for the Elementary Teacher
(9 semester hours credit)

Those students entering Block IV find the course composed of three basic components-Methods in Science and Social Studies, Methods in Mathematics, and Methods in Language Arts. The field experience component once again plays an important role in the course.

In this component of the block students are made aware of the objectives of the subject areas, the importance of the subjects in enhancing and fulfilling the lives of the learners, and the major approaches used in the teaching of the subjects. The students are also cognizant of the specific skills to be taught in the elementary school, and the basic curriculum patterns and designs appropriate to each subject. In addition

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[5]In line with recent legislation a six semester hour reading course (Education 401) is under development for secondary education majors and will be scheduled prior to major method course work.

to this, they gain an appreciation of the textbooks, basic references, and aids appropriate for elementary teaching of each subject.

In planning for instruction, the students demonstrate an understanding of the value of such planning. They also master the ability to plan and construct a series of lesson plans for instructional use.

In the final phase of this component students learn the importance of teaching strategies and they acquire an understanding of the current strategies in these areas. They demonstrate knowledge of the specific skills to be taught in the elementary school, the deductive and inductive teaching methods, and the purposes and techniques of testing and evaluation. These lessons are presented to elementary classes. After each presentation the students' performance, creativity, instructional techniques, and lesson content are critiqued and evaluated.

Block IV, building upon the first three blocks, introduces the elementary majors to actual teaching and classroom management. They have an understanding of the profession, the learner, and the techniques necessary for successful teaching. Moreover, they have had the opportunity to demonstrate this understanding prior to student teaching.

Students in the fields of Kindergarten Education or Special Education must complete additional work aside from Education 375 prior to enrolling in Block V. Kindergarten students must complete Education 380 (Kindergarten Education), and Education 381 (Teaching in the Kindergarten), each having three semester hours credit. Special Education Majors must complete Education 304 (Educational Tests and Measurement), three semester hours credit, and Education 390 (Psychology, Curriculum and Methods for the Teaching of the Mentally Retarded), six semester hours credit.

Education 390, utilizing team teaching, provides a study of the social, emotional, physical, and learning characteristics of the mentally retarded child. Students are introduced to the current practices and methods for teaching the mentally retarded. These students learn to identify general types or degrees of mental retardation and the characteristics of each type. They are introduced to assessment and diagnostic procedures and they experience the use of selected standardized instruments with children.

School programs for the Educable Mentally Retarded (EMR) and the Trainable Mentally Retarded (TMR) are presented. Students must be able to compare the curricula as to content and methods for these children with that of the "normal" child. They relate basic educational objectives for all children and specifically to the retarded child. Individualization is stressed in writing prescriptions.

Through a study of task analysis, students learn to identify and remediate deficiencies in the following areas of learning: perceptual-motor processes, language development, reading, arithmetic, and social development.

Students in the course observe and participate in the Acadia Developmental Program for the Trainable Mentally Retarded. They work with ages 3-21 in all phases of the program. Through this experience they are made aware that these children can be taught some academic skills. Upon completion of the course the students advance to Block V of the NTEP program.[6]

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[6]In keeping with recent legislation an additional three semester reading course, Education 360 (The Reading Process), is being developed for all students prior to entry into Block V. Also, in keeping with a legislative mandate, secondary education majors will complete a six semester hour reading course, Education 401 (Reading in the Secondary School), which is being developed for them prior to entry into the major methods course.

Education 400: Reading Instruction in the Elementary School
(6 semester hours credit)

This block has been designed to meet the demand for increased competence in reading instruction for teachers at the elementary level. The block continues to be in a formative stage because of recent change in emphasis to include an on-campus practicum component. To allow for tutoring sessions, this six hour block is scheduled for afternoon sessions only.

Approximately three weeks of instruction precedes the initiation of the tutoring practicum to prepare the tutors as well as make arrangements for the sessions. The tutees are second through sixth graders selected from area schools because of a need for reading improvement. Approximately fifteen hours of one-on-one tutoring is provided during the semester on a one-and-a-half hour per weekly session basis beginning at 2:15 p.m. and ending at 3:45. Lesson plans and a summary case report are required for the practicum and must be approved by the practicum supervisor. The remainder of the instructional time is utilized in lecture periods for teaching appropriate diagnosis and remedial techniques as well as devotion to methods, materials, and programmatic aspects of the developmental, functional, and recreational facets of the total elementary school reading program.

Education 450 and 460: Student Teaching
(12 semester hours credit)

All elementary and secondary education majors conclude their university preparation with student teaching.[7] Presently, students are

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[7]As noted, above students in Library Science, Kindergarten Education and Special Education are required to complete a practicum in addition to regular student teaching.

assigned to a supervising teacher and a university coordinator for the entire semester and demonstrate the competencies and skills they have mastered in the education program at Nicholls State University. Students failing to evidence such abilities may be required to schedule additional university work or may be advised to leave the program. In addition to successful completion of student teaching, students are required to pass a proficiency examination prior to certification.

The NTEP program has improved upon the traditional manner in which students are prepared for classroom teaching. The heart of the program is early and continuing exposure to classroom situations complemented by mastery of specific objectives at the university level. The NTEP students know what challenges teaching holds for them, the rewards and frustrations of the profession, and the demands that teaching requires. They are confident in their abilities to teach; secure in the knowledge that they have chosen the career they desire. The teaching profession cannot help but benefit from such individuals.

Budget Information

Since the program submitted for consideration affects the entire teacher education program at Nicholls State, a summary of the complete budget of the Department of Education is reported below.

Non-Personnel Services*

Item	Amount	
Travel	$ 4,500	
Operating services	3,000	
Supplies	20,000	
Total non-personnel		$27,000

Personnel Services*

Item	Amount	
Salaries of faculty assigned to undergraduate instruction	$ 96,456	$ 96,456
Grand Total	123,956	$123,956

*All funds are provided by the state.

Personnel Involved

The entire faculty of the College of Education is involved in the program. Presently there are twenty (20) faculty members in the Department of Education; thirteen (13) in the Department of Psychology and Counselor Education; ten (10) in the Department of Health and Physical Education; and three (3) in the Department of Student Teaching. In addition, there are ten (10) supervising teachers working with student teachers in special practicums, fifty-one (51) supervising teachers working with student teachers in an elementary school setting, and thirty-six (36) supervising teachers working with student teachers in a secondary school setting.

Evaluation

The program change has been brought about without any special funding. From the outset it was determined that program assessment would be cumulative. Attempts to ascertain its effectiveness have been made by asking students to evaluate the course upon the completion of each "block." Students are asked for their opinions and observations. In addition, members of the teaching teams are constantly attempting to evaluate and improve their own instructional techniques.

NICHOLLS STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

Any student who has not completed Education 250 prior to the Spring Semester 1978 and who is seeking teacher certification must adhere to the following conditions and requirements:

1. All students who enter the approved teacher education program at Nicholls State University will be governed by the University catalog at the time of the change. This change pertains even to a student who changes curriculum within the College of Education, such as from secondary to elementary, or mathematics to English.
2. Transfer credits will be accepted provided the course content in the course is equivalent to the course and requirements at Nicholls, including the field experience component. The evaluation of these transfer credits will be made by the student's department head or the dean.
3. Screening for speech problems by the speech department will be completed for all education students prior to entry in Education 250.
4. Prior to entry into a teacher education program (Education 250) each student must have three (3) hours of counseling by faculty member outside of the teacher education program. A schedule will be formulated for this purpose.
5. All students in the teacher education program will be on a conditional status until they complete Education 250 with a minimum grade of C. Subsequently, the student who attains regular status must meet all requirements herein to remain on regular status.
6. A student will be returned to conditional status automacically when the student's minimum overall grade point average falls below 2.200 and/or when a minimum grade of C is not earned in a professional course.
7. A student on conditional status will not be permitted to register for any course numbered 300 or above without the consent of the department head of the student's major field.
8. A student must earn a minimum grade of C in all professional courses; have an over-all average of 2.2 out of 4.0 and a minimum grade of C in English 101 and English 102 and be classified as a sophomore prior to entry in Education 250, the first course in the series of professional courses.
9. A student must earn a minimum grade of C in Speech 101 or its equivalent prior to enrollment in Psychology 308.
10. A student must complete six semester hours of reading if he/she is a secondary major and nine semester hours if he/she is an elementary major.
11. A minimum of 270 clock hours of student teaching with at least 180 hours in actual teaching with a substantial portion thereof on an all-day basis is required of all education majors.
12. The student must pass an examination on English proficiency pedagogical knowledge and knowledge in the area of specialization as required by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education prior to assignment in Kindergarten, Library Science or Special Education Practicums or assignment in Student

6. A student will be returned to conditional status automatically when the student's minimum overall grade point average falls below 2.200 and/or when a minimum grade of C is not earned in a professional course.
7. A student on conditional status will not be permitted to register for any course numbered 300 or above without the consent of the department head of the student's major field.
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12. The student must pass an examination on English proficiency pedagogical knowledge and knowledge in the area of specialization as required by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education prior to assignment in Kindergarten, Library Science or Special Education Practicums or assignment in Student Teaching.
13. Courses in which a minimum grade of C is required are:
    1. All required education courses.
    2. All required psychology courses.
    3. All required speech course.
    4. Children's Literature (Library Science 301)
    5. Louisiana History (History 371)
    6. Art 371, 372, Industrial Arts 223
    7. Music 337
    8. H & P E 373
    9. H & P E 270
    10. All courses in the major or minor field.
14. The student must have a minimum of 2.5 out of 4.00 overall average as a requirement for graduation.